

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BC

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KHAMA'S REMARKS ON RISE OF ANTI-WHITE SENTIMENTS IN

BOTSWANA

REF: GABORONE 446

SUMMARY: IN HIS MARCH 29 SPEECH TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE BOTSWANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY, PRESIDENT KHAMA ADDRESSED THE PROBLEM OF APPARENTLY RISING ANTI-WHITE SENTIMENT IN BOTSWANA. HE ASSERTED THAT TO ALLOW SUCH FEELINGS TO MANIFEST THEMSELVES IN BOTSWANA WOULD COMFORT RACIST SOCIETIES AND DISCOURAGE BADLY NEEDED AID FROM THE DEVELOPED WORLD. INCITEMENT OF HATRED AGAINST WHITE CITIZENS OR EXPATRIATES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED, AND LAW AND ORDER WILL BE STRICKLY MAINTAINED.END SUMMARY.

1. DURING HIS MARCH 29, 1975, SPEECH TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE BOTSWANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY (REFTEL), PRESIDENT KHAMA REAFFIRMED THE GOB'S POLICY OF NON-RACIALISM AND DEPLORED THE
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RISE OF ANTI-WHITE SENTIMENT IN BOTSWANA, TERMING SUCH SENTIMENT

A QUOTE SERIOUS THREAT TO RACIAL PEACE IN OUR NATION UNQUOTE. HE FURTHER STATED THAT QUOTE TO ALLOW RACISM TO REAR ITS UGLY HEAD IN OUR MIDST WOULD LOSE THE RESPECT OF OUR FRIENDS AND ADMIRERS ALL OVER THE WORLD AND WOULD GIVE COMFORT TO THOSE SOCIETIES AND NATIONS IN WHICH RACISM HAS BEEN ADOPTED AS STATE POLICY UNQUOTE. (READ SOUTH AFRICA)

2. THE PRESIDENT STATED THAT BOTSWANA WILL CONTINUE TO NEED ASSISTANCE, ESPECIALLY IN TRAINED PERSONNEL, FOR MANY YEARS FROM THE DEVELOPED WORLD. IN ORDER TO ATTRACT SUCH PERSONNEL, BOTSWANA MUST HAVE QUOTE POLITICAL STABILITY, RACIAL HARMONY AND GOOD HUMAN RELATIONS UNQUOTE. THE PRESIDENT CONDEMNED RECENT UNFOUNDED PERSONAL ATTACKS IN PARLIAMENT AND ELSEWHERE AGAINST SOME WHITE CITIZEN AND EXPATRIATE GOB OFFICIALS. THE PRESIDENT SAID SUCH ATTACKS QUOTE CANNOT BE TOLERATED UNQUOTE.

3. DIRECTING HIS REMARKS TO UNNAMED MP'S (PHILLIP MATANTE OF THE BOTSWANA PEOPLE'S PARTY) WHO HAD STATED IN PARLIAMENT THAT CITIZENSHIP PAPERS WOULD NEVER MAKE A WHITE PERSON A TRUE BOTSWANA, THE PRESIDENT REAFFIRMED THE GOB'S RESOLVE NOT TO ALLOW QUOTE THE CITIZENSHIP OF NATURALIZED BOTSWANA TO BE CHALLENGED, EVEN IN PARLIAMENT ITSELF UNQUOTE. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT AS FAR AS HIS GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BOTSWANA CITIZEN WHO IS BORN IN BOTSWANA AND ONE WHO BECOMES A CITIZEN BY NATURALIZATION. THE GOVERNMENT QUOTE WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY INCITEMENT OF HATRED AGAINST THESE CITIZENS UNQUOTE.

4. THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH DIRECTLY BERATED THE BOTSWANA NATIONAL FRONT (BNF) FOR RECENT TALK AT ITS PUBLIC MEETINGS ABOUT FORMER SOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER VERWOERD'S ASSASSINATION. QUOTE THIS CAN BE CONSTRUED AS THE INTENTION OF THE BNF TO RESORT TO THE KNIFE AND GUN TO TOPPLE THIS GOVERNMENT. ALL ACTION WILL BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THAT LAW AND ORDER IS MAINTAINED IN THIS COUNTRY UNQUOTE.

5. COMMENT: THERE HAS BEEN INCREASED ATTENTION BOTH IN THE PRESS AND IN THE GABORONE POLITICAL COMMUNITY TO THE APPARENTLY INCREASING ANTI-WHITE FEELINGS IN BOTSWANA (SEPAIR). THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT'S SPEECH IS THE CLEAREST INDICATION TO DATE OF THE CONCERN WITH WHICH THE GOB VIEWS THESE DEVELOPMENTS. IT IS ALSO A SERIOUS WARNING TO THOSE WHO ATTEMPT TO EXACERBATE AND EXPLOIT SUCH FEELINGS THAT THEIR ACTIONS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

6. THE EMERGENCE OF BLACK RACISM PARTLY REFLECTS THE ACUTE SHORTAGE AT BOTSWANA MANPOWER AND THE RESULTING HEAVY DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN AND EXPATRIATE PERSONNEL; 80PERCENT OF THE POSITIONS AT

MIDDLE AND SENIOR LEVELS ARE HELD BY SUCH PERSONNEL AND NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IS FORESEEABLE. AT THE SAME TIME, PRESSURE FOR LOCALIZATION IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE AND COULD BECOME A SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEM IN THE ABSENCE OF A MASSIVE PUSH IN EDUCATION TO TRAIN MORE BOTSWANA TO ASSUME POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY. THUS AID ASSISTANCE TO EDUCATION IS NOT ONLY ESSENTIAL TO EXPAND BOTSWANA'S

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY; IT IS ALSO CRITICAL FOR MAINTENANCE OF POLITICAL STABILITY. END COMMENT.
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